



13 August 2005



Fort-to-Port Safety

1. As USAREUR transforms, we will continue to provide forces to help fight the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). This winter several USAREUR units, including Headquarters, V Corps, will deploy once again to the USCENTCOM AOR in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. When V Corps Headquarters deploys, USAREUR will be simultaneously providing resources for Multi-National Corps - Iraq Headquarters for Operation Iraqi Freedom and Combined Joint Task Force - 76 Headquarters for Operation Enduring Freedom.
2. USAREUR's contributions to the GWOT are clear: we are sending some the Nation's best-trained and most-capable forces to the fight. None of our capabilities matter, however, if our Soldiers are injured or killed before they arrive on the frontlines.
3. For those of you who have never been involved in a deployment, be forewarned: deployment operations are inherently dangerous, particularly in a European winter. USAREUR and the Army have learned many lessons—many of them the hard way—from previous deployments. One important lesson we learned is that effective composite risk management implemented early in the deployment planning phase is critical to preventing accidents and loss of life.
4. The areas we should be most concerned about during predeployment planning are listed below. They do not necessarily represent areas that have been the source of the most injuries and property damage in this theater. However, according to lessons learned throughout the Army, they have more potential for significant accidents and require special attention.
 - **Convoy Operations.** We have all experienced the “hurry up and wait” routine. Convoy operations are traditionally slow and for good reasons: tactical vehicles are not designed to travel at high speeds. Convoy operations often involve long hours and precautions must be taken to avoid the dangers associated with fatigue. Drivers and vehicle commanders must follow and enforce deliberate rest and sleep plans. In addition, road reconnaissance is vital before and during convoy operations to identify hazards. Convoy personnel must receive handouts with up-to-date roadmaps, photographs of significant landmarks, emergency telephone numbers, and emergency procedures in case they have an accident or become separated from the convoy unexpectedly.
 - **Rail Operations.** Rail operations include railhead loading and unloading operations, en route security operations, and guard details from start to finish. Those involved in these activities must remember one simple but extremely important rule: **DO NOT CLIMB ON LOADED RAILCARS** from the time they are loaded for departure to the time they are ready to be unloaded. Overhead powerlines demand our utmost respect: two people were electrocuted this year when they came too close to these electrical lines.

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- **Port Operations.** Seaports in theater are commercial ports. Commercial and military operations will likely be occurring simultaneously at these ports. Congestion and many moving parts create an environment with a high potential for accidents. Leaders must plan ahead to avoid the risk of Soldiers operating equipment for which they do not have a license. Know each Soldier's limits. Do not ask a Soldier to operate a piece of equipment unless you know that he or she is licensed to do so. In addition, always use the appropriate number of ground guides to ensure safe operations.

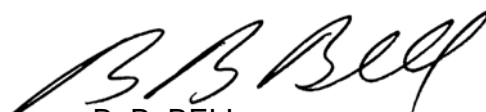
- **Aviation Operations.** The turnover of aviation personnel directly affects the experience and proficiency level of our aviators. We must use the "crawl, walk, run" approach to conduct individual and collective training. Practice aircrew coordination in the simulator and during every training flight. Rehearse actions for brownouts and practice go-around procedures. Ensure that the actions to take when encountering reduced visibility conditions are second nature to your aviators. Also ensure that mission briefers ask hard questions.

- **Predeployment Leave.** A loss of life is a tragic loss, regardless of how or when it happens. Know what your Soldiers are doing when they are off duty. I expect leaders to identify high-risk personnel using the standard assessment processes according to Army in Europe Command Policy Letter 3. After assessments are completed, leaders must review them before their next Under the Oak Tree counseling session and update them as necessary.

5. Leaders: I want you to personally supervise and evaluate operations. We need the commitment of commanders and leaders at every level to ensure our Soldiers execute to standard throughout deployment operations. Establish clear priorities for your unit, and ensure that your Soldiers understand that performing the task to standard is your top priority.

6. Soldiers: Learn, ensure you understand what you have learned, and execute to standard. You are ultimately responsible for your own safety. Do not do anything foolish. You are not invulnerable and you may kill yourself or others. You are a proud and vital member of the USAREUR Team and your fellow Soldiers depend on you. Look out for your buddies to ensure they are also fully aware of what they are doing.

7. I am proud of each of you and grateful for your continued commitment to our Nation. By working together and paying close attention to the areas addressed above, we can achieve our goal and ensure everyone gets to the fight safely. Doing so will help ensure that we continue to execute with excellence Any Mission, Anywhere.



B. B. BELL
General, US Army
Commanding



ANY MISSION, ANYWHERE!